

Castle Acre Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Libby Firth, 7 Sandles Court, Back Lane, Castle Acre, Norfolk PE32 2XF
Telephone: 07825 229345 Email: libbyofirth@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER TO ALL CASTLE ACRE RESIDENTS – Edition 6

15 May 2020

Dear Residents

This is the sixth edition of the online newsletter. Its issue has been delayed until there was more clarity arising from the Government's three step policy announced on 10 May; how both Norfolk and West Norfolk Borough Councils would react; and how the PC should continue to function in the next couple of months. The fifth edition can still be accessed by clicking on Download news April (5)20. The earlier editions can be e-mailed out as PDFs, on request to Libby.

If you know of anyone in the village unable to view the updates electronically, please either print off a copy yourself or call our Parish Clerk, Libby, who will print and arrange for one of the village volunteers to deliver it. Libby's contact details are shown in the title heading. Please tell Libby if you need help with shopping, prescription collections, dog walking etc. and she will allocate one of our 12 volunteers to assist you.

This edition contains further updates from the Borough Council, good news on fish & chips and an update from the Parish Council (PC). Some generic advice is repeated from earlier newsletters and any changes there are highlighted **New!**

Village playground remains closed

Contrary to rumours, the play area remains closed, possibly until 1 June, or even to 4 July, subject to revised government guidelines. The playing field can be used for recreation, though not team sports such as cricket. The ECB guidelines for England state:

You can exercise outdoors on your own, with members of your household or with one other person from outside your household while keeping two metres apart at all times.

- No club should reopen their outdoor facilities if they feel unable to meet the requirements
- Outdoor Activity only (No indoor activity allowed)
- Clubhouses can be reopened in a limited way. (First-Aid equipment, toilets)
- Hands should be washed before and after each session
- Social distancing to be observed at all times
- Maximum 2 people per net (unless all in same household)
- Adjacent nets not to be used (every other permitted)
- Usage should be booked with the club. No unauthorised use. (10 minutes between bookings)
- Use your own equipment if possible.
- No saliva or sweat should come into contact with the ball at any time.
- Coaching – One to One sessions only

Fish & Chips back in Castle Acre!

In case you haven't spotted the notice, the unit at the Spar shop opened again on Tuesday 12 May but only for telephone orders for collection between 4.00 and 8.00 pm – Tuesdays to Saturdays. Call 755234

Update from Horticultural Society

Fakenham Garden Centre (01328 863380) - open from 13 May (but not necessarily fully-stocked just yet).

West Acre Nurseries (01760 755562) - are back to normal opening — but will still deliver to Castle Acre if you can't visit.

Packwell Nurseries, Mileham: (01328 701308) - open as usual but for personal collection only, no deliveries now.

Didlington Nurseries: (01842 878288) - open for normal business from 13 May: 9am - 4.30pm, 20 minutes plant-choosing time!

Myhills, Swaffham: (01760 721272) - open as usual, collections but no browsing; still delivering as before — phone your order first.

Peter Beales Roses, Attleborough: (01953 454707) - open from 13 May; can supply catalogues to you by post/e-mail but orders may take slightly longer than usual, due to reduced staff numbers.

Planting trees

If you are keen on planting new trees in your garden, the Woodland Trust is offering supplies for delivery next November. For more details, go to <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/>

Community meals scheme

The White Hart in Swaffham is co-ordinating a community meals scheme, with the Market Cross supporting, by cooking meals throughout the week. There are meals available to pre-order and also a food bank and goods can be collected or they will distribute to the elderly and vulnerable residents. Call the White Hart on 01760 724295

Information about Coronavirus

www.nhs.uk/coronavirus and www.gov.uk/coronavirus are trusted sources of information.

The best places for health advice are:

- NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Public Health England - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Listen to Radio Norfolk for local news and updates. Check out Borough Council services at www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus

Norfolk County Council (NCC) advice to residents:

- Only accept help from someone you know and trust.
- Never give anyone your cash card or credit card and PIN – always give cash and ask for a receipt.
- If someone is doing shopping for you, provide them with a list and budget, based on what you can afford.
- It is your home and you do not have to agree to anything a visitor may ask.
- Never deal with unknown cold caller.
- If you are in doubt, or feel pressurised or threatened close the door, call a friendly neighbour or in an emergency ring 999

NCC updates (from 29 April)

No further updates received.

Updates from the Borough Council (from 1 May)

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk can be found on the following social media channels:

Facebook: [facebook.com/BCKLWNnewsandevents/](https://www.facebook.com/BCKLWNnewsandevents/) Twitter: twitter.com/WestNorfolkBC Instagram: [instagram.com/bcklwn/](https://www.instagram.com/bcklwn/)

Bin collections

Due to the reduced number of waste teams, it won't be possible to collect your separate food waste. Please place this in your black bin. Equally, it will not be possible to collect side waste or garden waste that has been bagged. Please feed any excess garden waste into your brown bin over the next couple of collections. To keep up to date with any service changes, please visit www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/yourbins or follow Borough Council social media channels. In the meantime, we appreciate all the efforts householders are taking to do the right thing with their waste. Composting can be a way in which people can dispose of food waste, and more information can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3aWRs5o>. The Council is also clear that fly tipping will not be tolerated.

New! Hempton and King's Lynn recycling centres opened from 13 May.

Travel to coastal areas

The Borough Council is preparing for the relaxation of travel which is likely to bring visitors to the Borough's coastal areas. Car parks in the Borough have remained open throughout the Covid-19 crisis, with the exception of the Cliff Top car park in Hunstanton which is now reopened. All car parks will, where possible, have social distancing markings in place around the pay and display machines. While a regular cleaning regime is in place, the Council is encouraging people to download the parking app in advance of their journey to avoid contact with the machine. If they do choose to pay at the machine, they are advised to cover their fingers or to use a blunt object such as a pen to press buttons.

The Council asks visitors to follow the government guidance and to ensure that they bring hand sanitiser with them to use frequently. We hope that travellers will be sensible and won't all come to the resort at peak times, spreading their journeys across the week and through the day.

Signage will be in place around the resort reminding visitors to follow social distancing guidance, keeping two metres apart where possible, and also to only meet with one person who is not a member of their household. Regular hand washing/sanitising is being recommended, along with the wearing of face coverings where appropriate. The Government has issued guidance on safe travel, which includes a checklist of planning a journey and what to take. The Council is encouraging visitors to follow this advice.

The Council will be checking food businesses and kiosks in the area, to ensure that they are compliant with the new guidance. It is known that the virus travels less well in the open, and we do have lovely long, wide beaches, so people should be able to socially distance themselves when enjoying their visit. Until further guidance is received, many retail and leisure premises will remain closed, including the chalets in Hunstanton. No entertainment has been booked for The Green. Public toilets are open, but people are advised that maintaining social distancing in public toilets is virtually impossible. People may wish to take this risk into account when making their decision to travel.

Housing Benefit

The Borough Council is suspending all recovery action for Housing Benefit overpayments until 30 June 2020. This means that it won't take any money from people's current Housing Benefit payments, deductions from other benefits will stop, and won't take Direct Debits for any payment arrangements. The Council will also ask employers to stop making deductions from earnings for recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit. For more information, go to www.west-norfolk.gov.uk and click on the link to Housing Benefit overpayment page.

The government has increased the Local Housing Allowance rates as part of its response to the Covid-19 outbreak. The changes to Housing Benefit claims have already been made, and those affected will have received a letter or email. The Council has also updated eligible claims with the new Earnings Disregard from April 2020. Letters and emails have been sent to customers. People can check benefits claims by visiting www.west-norfolk.gov.uk and click on the link to manage your revenues account online. Anyone needing more information about Housing Benefit because of a low income due to self-isolation please call 01553 616200.

Food Bank

The Borough Council is working closely with the food banks to ensure they have enough supplies and also to help people who would not normally access the food banks to access its services. Anyone who needs their services can contact the helpline number 0344 800 8020. Their request will then be forwarded to the Council who will arrange a food parcel or food bank vouchers. Please do encourage anyone who may be struggling in this way to call the helpline.

Borough Council service impacts

Please remember our council offices are no longer accepting visits from the public. People can contact us through Live Chat on our website, or by calling us on 01553 616200. Anyone needing to provide documents can post and drop these into the letterbox which is emptied daily. All of our service impacts can be found here: www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus

Benefits

If you need advice on claiming benefits, go to www.citizensadvice.org.uk and click on Benefits. There is a wealth of information there to assist you, including how to apply for Universal Credit. This website has a comprehensive guide to how to cope with issues thrown up by the Coronavirus, including detailed help about avoiding scams. Norfolk Citizens Advice is aiming to offer advice through Adviceline, email and

webchat. See the website on how access these. The website has been updated to reflect new protections for those renting and others struggling to pay bills. Go to <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/if-you-cant-pay-your-bills-because-of-coronavirus/> A new section has also been added for people worried about having to go to work which is titled 'Coronavirus - what it means for you' Click on <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/>

Weekly updates on all aspects of household finances

Martin Lewis's excellent weekly e-mail circular contains a wealth of useful information. Go to www.moneysavingexpert.com and sign up to receive the circulars.

Parish Council news (updates at 15 May)

The May PC meeting was re-scheduled to Thursday 21 May. However, the latest government guidance on public meetings, confirmed by the Norfolk Association of Local Councils, does not permit Cllrs to meet in public. Therefore the physical May meeting can't take place. Key decisions will be moved to the scheduled June meeting on the 11th. These decisions are 1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the next 12 months. 2. Voting on co-opting a new Cllr.

Due to a new planning application ref: 20/00573/FM - siting of 14 glamping eco pods over two phases for use as holiday accommodation on the land west of the school (known as Further Pond Close), off Back Lane, the PC will now hold its meeting on 21 May at 19.30 by Zoom. Anyone who wishes to view the meeting should advise the Clerk. You can also post your comments on this application at the Borough planning portal at www.west-norfolk.gov.uk. Please copy the Clerk.

Limited PC business will also be covered at this meeting. An agenda will be posted by Sunday 17 May.

May is the traditional month for the Annual Parish Meeting where residents are encouraged to come to the village hall to question PC Cllrs about the past parish year. Given the current circumstances, this is cancelled. From 21 May, you can read the Chairman's Report at [https://www.castleacre.info/images/downloads/Chairman's Annual Report May20.pdf](https://www.castleacre.info/images/downloads/Chairman's%20Annual%20Report%20May20.pdf).

What other PC developments since 29 April?

Please see the minuted record of Parish Council business conducted by circular e-mail during April 2020 at https://www.castleacre.info/images/downloads/minutes_apr20.pdf A printed version is on the PC noticeboard outside the Spar shop.

To date, there hasn't been much progress on many outstanding issues due to restricted working, although Highways and BT continue to make the most of less vehicle movements to get road works or cable repairs done – Massingham Road/North Street junction and Bailey Street being recent examples. Our Clerk, Libby, is chasing to get more potholes filled - at the entrance to Foxes Meadow, Orchard Lane and North Street outside No. 112 being prime cases. Please e-mail her if you spot others in the parish.

No further confirmation from Holkham that the Massingham Road housing development will begin in September. Now construction has been given the green light, the PC may have more news soon.

We would remind residents that the small green area in Pales Green is leased by Holkham to the village and residents can visit it, if they so wish. A small sign on the gate prohibits dogs.

Street lights. If there is a defective street light near you, the quickest way to get it fixed is to e-mail the Clerk rather than NCC or lighting suppliers.

As reported on the national news, local authorities are encouraging second home owners not to visit the village until the lockdown restrictions are eased further.

Should residents have any questions or concerns that can be resolved by the PC, please e-mail the Clerk.

For contact details of all your Parish Councillors, go to https://www.castleacre.info/parish_news.htm or call Libby.

Please respect social-distancing and stay safe.

Martin Hickey, Chairman, Castle Acre Parish Council

martin.hickey3@btinternet.com